



Munoz Is Hurt by Treatment from Protege

By BRUCE BLOSSAT

AMERICA'S interest in the future of Puerto Rico has risen since the spread of Castroite communism thru the Caribbean.

Our military intervention in the Dominican Republic is a gauge on the fear felt here that the whole region is vulnerable.

A U. S. Government, which often has declared its willingness to cut all bonds with Puerto Rico, may have to hope now that the island's people never alter their present overwhelming disposition to stay within the U. S. fold.

FEW

That mood is so strong that last November the Independence Party gained a mere 2.7 per cent of the island-wide vote in the election which gave the governorship to Roberto Sanchez Velella.

Knowledgeable sources believe the dim outlook for independence at the polls is well understood by Gov. Sanchez' young advisers — leftish intellectuals whose anti-American and "independentista" sentiments are realized by few Puerto Ricans.

These insiders, "The Group of 22," are thought to rest their hopes in the prospect of an incident. Says one source:

"They can't gain popular support as things are. They'll have to try to precipitate some misunderstanding, some emotional difference with the United States.

"They have to hope that in such circumstances the United States Government would do something to humiliate the Puerto Ricans, to kick them in the teeth. Then they would say 'we can't take this.'"

WAITING GAME

"The Group" is said to be consolidating its positions of influence around Gov. Sanchez, and biding time. Meanwhile, their distaste for Americans and their contempt for former Gov.

Julio Munoz Marin is ill-

concealed from the few Puerto Ricans aware of what is going on.

One man reports that their descriptions of Gov. Munoz, who for more than two decades was the islanders' father image, add up to a kind of Spanish-language version of "senile old crock."

Gov. Munoz is known to be deeply hurt that Gov. Sanchez never has consulted him in the six months since he has been governor. The former governor, stunned by the turn of events, has not yet spoken out because the "inside independentistas" have not offered him a convenient target.

UNIVERSITY

Most of these young intellectuals — evidently were nurtured in the seedbed of the University of Puerto Rico, where the independence movement has attracted both students and faculty.

It is being surmised that, having appraised the feeble Independence Party as a hopeless route to their goal, they joined the majority Popular Democratic party to press the cause from within. Some time ago they took over that party's youth group.

How they managed to move in on Gov. Sanchez is still a mystery. One or two suggest that, as a lifetime administrative technician, he may not grasp what his ambitious appointees are up to.

The irony is acute, since it was assumed Gov. Sanchez would do nothing to depart in any way from Gov. Munoz's established policy — continued commonwealth status for the island, with its unique blend of political autonomy and strong link with the mainland.

Nevertheless, the "inside independentistas" are in fact Gov. Sanchez' closest advisers today. And most of them were installed, it should be noted, long before the Dominican affair stirred public outcries.